

INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 3 has been cancelled, claim 1 has been amended, and claims 7-10 have been added. No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry are respectfully requested. Support for the amendment and new claims can be found, for example, in the Specification, on pages 10 and 11.

Claims 1-10 are pending and under consideration.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102:

In the Office Action, at page 2, item 3, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (e)(1) as being anticipated by Silvasi (U.S. 6,626,579 – hereinafter Silvasi). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. Applicant traverses this rejection and respectfully requests reconsideration.

Claim 3 has been cancelled.

Amended, independent claim 1 recites: "...an electrically insulating layer provided at a surface area of contact between the outer member and the knuckle, the electrically insulating layer consisting of a coating layer functioning as an electric insulator."

In Silvasi, all of the disclosed embodiments of the invention have a ring (52, 62, 72, 82, and 92) which is press or slip fitted onto either the bearing unit 14 or the steering knuckle 16. The rings are made of either metal that is at least partially coated with an anti-corrosive coating, or plastic.

Applicant respectfully submits that Silvasi neither discloses nor suggests "...the electrically insulating layer consisting of a coating layer functioning as an electric insulator."

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

In the Office Action, at page 3, item 5, the Examiner rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Silvasi, as applied to claim 1, and in view of Kenji (JP 2001221243A - hereinafter Kenji). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action

and therefore not repeated. Applicant traverses this rejection and respectfully requests reconsideration.

In the Office Action, at page 4, item 6, the Examiner rejected claims 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Silvasi and Kenji as applied to claim 4 above, and further in view of The Prior Art drawing (FIG. 5). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. Applicant traverses this rejection and respectfully requests reconsideration.

Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the cited art, and should be allowable for at least the above-mentioned reasons. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, and 4-6, which ultimately depend from independent claim 1, should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

NEW CLAIMS

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 7 and 8, which ultimately depend from independent claim 1, should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

Further, new, independent claim 9 recites: "...an electrically insulating layer provided at a surface area of contact between the outer member and the knuckle, the electrically insulating layer comprising a plated ply with a chromate treated layer thereon, and a coating layer functioning as an electric insulator."

In Silvasi, as noted above, all of the disclosed embodiments of the invention have a ring (52, 62, 72, 82, and 92) which is press or slip fitted onto either the bearing unit 14 or the steering knuckle 16. The rings are made of either metal that is at least partially coated with an anti-corrosive coating, or plastic. For example, Silvasi states:

"[i]n the illustrated embodiment, the ring 52 includes a metal ring 52A which is coated with a suitable anti-corrosive coating material 52B. The ring 52A can be formed from steel, stainless steel, or galvanized steel, and the anti-corrosive coating material 52B can be an ecoat, a paint or a plating."

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Silvasi nor Kenji either discloses or suggests, alone or in combination "...the electrically insulating layer comprising a plated ply with a chromate treated layer thereon, and a coating layer functioning as an electric insulator."

Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 9 patentably distinguishes over the cited art, and should be allowable for at least the above-mentioned reasons. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10, which depends from independent claim 9, should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 9, as well as for the additional features recited therein.

CONCLUSION:

In accordance with the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot, and further, that all pending claims patentably distinguish over the cited art. Thus, there being no further outstanding objections or rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any remaining issues to be addressed, it is believed that prosecution can be expedited by the Examiner contacting the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview to discuss resolution of such issues.

Please note that a new Power of Attorney and Revocation of Prior Powers of Attorney was filed for this case on November 19, 2003 (copy enclosed). Therefore, please address all communications to Staas & Halsey LLP, USPTO customer No. 21171, at the address indicated below.


If there are any underpayments or overpayments of fees associated with the filing of this Amendment, please charge and/or credit the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Serial No.: 10/654,965

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: September 27, 2004

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

In the Office Action, at page 2, item 1, the Examiner objected to the drawings. To overcome this objection, replacement figures are submitted herewith. The sheet containing FIGS. 4 and 5 replaces the original sheet including FIGS. 4 and 5. In FIG. 5, the label "Prior Art" has been added. Approval of these changes to the Drawings is respectfully requested.